



Beyond the Wire

CPOW

Civilian Ex-Prisoners of War
(Formerly BACEPOW)

A CHARTERED CHAPTER OF
AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR

Volume 18, Number 1

Sally Meadows - Commander@CPOW.org

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Websites: CPOW.org and Cliff Mills' PhilippineInternment.com

From the Commander

This newsletter focuses on our reunions, both the recent one in October 2024 in Norfolk, Virginia at the MacArthur Memorial, and the one next month in Sacramento. As a first priority, it's time to register for our fast-approaching February 2025 reunion marking the 80th Anniversary of Liberation; the program is February 22-23, with registration opening on February 21. The information to book your room at Embassy Suites by Hilton Sacramento and to send in your event registration to CPOW is on page 3 along with a preliminary program for the reunion. Please be sure to use our discount code, 90V, when you book your room with the hotel. The form to renew your CPOW membership for 2025, which also entitles you to a discount for the reunion, is on page 4. You can write one check to cover both membership and reunion fees when you mail the forms.

Please join us in Sacramento for what is likely to be CPOW's last reunion and to celebrate 80 years since liberation. This is an opportunity to reconnect with, and commemorate, those that were in the internment camps in the Philippines. It is also an opportunity to be interviewed and filmed for a documentary by Emmy award-winning filmmaker Arden Teresa Lewis (daughter of former internee Karen Kerns Lewis), which will tell this still largely unknown story. A more detailed program and schedule will be provided when you pick up your registration materials at the hotel.

In this newsletter, we have an update from Daniel Doolan on the October event at the MacArthur Memorial in conjunction with the Alamo Scouts. The event was organized by Daniel with help from Chris Larsen and Cindie Leonard. We appreciate the MacArthur Memorial hosting us. We also have an update from Arden Lewis about her vision for the documentary and the progress she made filming in Norfolk.

In addition to our event in Sacramento next month, Ryan Blum, the Superintendent of the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial in Fort Bonifacio, Philippines shares information about the significant commemoration to mark the 80th anniversary of the Liberation of Manila which will be held at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial (see page 5). Some of you may be attending that instead of our event in Sacramento. If you do, please share your experience with us to include in the July newsletter.

Warm and healthy wishes for 2025. I hope to see many of you in Sacramento in February.

Sally Meadows

Norfolk Reunion

By Daniel Doolan

With the support of CPOW's Board of Directors, Chris Larsen (whose father was a former STIC internee, while Chris lived with his mother outside of the camp), and Daniel Doolan (Board Descendants Representative) organized the Civilian ex-Prisoner of War Group's first east coast reunion in over a decade. This weekend in Norfolk Virginia (October 11-13, 2024) included many adventures, including an exploration of the MacArthur Memorial Museum and its exhibit "The Price of Unpreparedness: POWs in the Philippines During World War II".

Saturday morning featured an event at the MacArthur Memorial Museum theater cohosted by the MacArthur Memorial Museum, the Alamo Scouts, and our very own Civilian ex-Prisoner of War Group! The program included:

- Amanda Williams welcoming us to the Museum and discussing museum content
- Jim Zobel reflecting on longstanding collaborations with the Philippines POW community and Museum archival activities
- Our own Chris Larsen discussing his experiences in the Philippines, and at Santo Tomas
- Daniel Doolan discussing the CPOW group and his research interviews with former STIC internees
- Representatives from the Alamo Scouts discussing this elite fighting team that freed POWs in the Philippines and far east during the latter half of the war.

A warm thank you to the entire MacArthur Memorial Museum team, including but not limited to Jim Zobel (archivist); Amanda Williams (Director); and Jennifer Cottle (Education Manager); and the Alamo Scouts team including Russ Blaise and Lance Zedric.

Throughout the event we were most fortunate to have Emmy Award winning documentarian and CPOW member Arden Teresa Lewis — who filmed some of the activities. She will join us for the February CPOW reunion in Sacramento!

Saturday all 40+ (7 internees and 33 descendants/members) from the CPOW group went out for dinner and reminisced with stories and reflections.

It was a joy bringing many members of the group back together and we are excited to see many of you (and some of our other members) this February in northern California!

Daniel Doolan, CPOW Board Descendants Representative, is the son of STIC Internee Roy F. Doolan.

Norfolk and Sacramento

By Arden Teresa Lewis

Hello CPOW members. I had the honor and the opportunity to attend the Norfolk reunion in October at the MacArthur Memorial Museum and Archive. To see the package-string crocheted brassiere of my grandmother, Thelma Kerns, STIC internee, was quite the novelty, but also a bittersweet example of her quest for normalcy during the years of incarceration. The Price of Unpreparedness was an incredible experience.

My film company, AT Lewis Films, is on a quest to capture interviews of the remaining survivors and some of their descendants to ensure the legacy of our family stories is passed onto future generations. The film would include the Filipino survivors as well. This film will draw attention to the many books and films that have been published in the past and be used as an

educational primary source tool in schools, universities and archives.

We are a small team who are attending these two reunions to respectfully document them. We captured 10 interviews in Norfolk. We plan to be at the 80th anniversary of Liberation reunion in Sacramento on February 21 - 23, with my Mom, Karen Kerns Lewis and my brothers, Mark and Kern Lewis. We will be around the displays and the dining hall as unobtrusively as possible. Come on up and say hello and share a story. We also will be conducting interviews by appointment in our hotel room, possibly on Saturday afternoon in between the reunion's scheduled events. We plan to have a short work sample of what we have filmed so far to show you the concept of the planned film.

Arden Teresa Lewis is the daughter of STIC internee, Karen Kerns Lewis.

Photos From the Norfolk Reunion at the MacArthur Memorial



WWII LIBERATORS AND CIVILIAN EX-PRISONERS
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OCT 12TH | 9AM

TO PRESENT A SERIES OF PUBLIC TALKS ON
WARTIME EXPERIENCES.

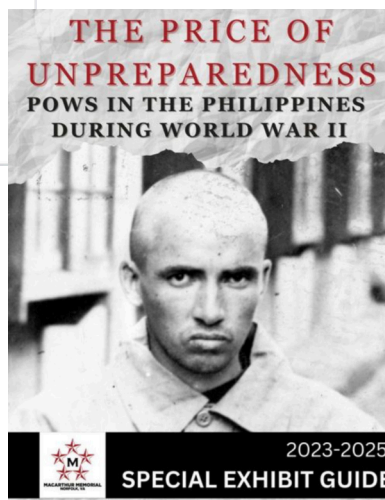
MACARTHUR MEMORIAL VISITORS CENTER
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OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

FREE ADMISSION

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WWW.MACARTHURMEMORIAL.ORG



Attendees (L-R): David W. Blackledge, Karen Everard, Lindsay Nielson, Donald Thompson, Chris Larsen, Gail Barnett, Chris Lehman



Event organizers Chris Larsen and Daniel Doolan

80th Anniversary of Liberation
CPOW's 2025 PRELIMINARY Reunion Agenda
Friday February 21 through Sunday February 23
Embassy Suites by Hilton Sacramento Riverfront Promenade
100 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA 95814

Friday February 21

2:00 - 5:00 Registration opens, Atrium
5:00 Cocktail Reception
Dinner on your own

Saturday February 22

Self-Registration, Atrium
9:00 Opening & Welcome
9:15 "Passing On: Saving the Legacy of Santo Tomas: A Documentary Film Project", Arden Lewis
Documentary interview opportunities throughout the day
10:30 Norfolk Reunion, Daniel Doolan
11:30 The Alamo Scouts and the Liberation of Cabanatuan Prisoner of War Camp, Sheila A. Hard, Alamo Scouts Historical Foundation
12:30 Lunch Break – on your own

Saturday (cont.)

2:00 "Let's Show Them How Democracy Works": Agency in Adversity at Santo Tomas", Mary Beth Klee
3:00 - 5:00 Lightning Round – Camp memory sharing, Sally Meadows
5:00 Cocktail Reception
Dinner on your own

Sunday February 23

9:00 - 3:00 Book Discussions and Sales, and "Show and Tell", bring your memorabilia to share with others!
9:00 - 10:30 CPOW Board of Directors Meeting, Sally Meadows
10:30 - 12:00 Descendants Meeting, Daniel Doolan
12:30 - 2:30 Banquet Luncheon
- Keynote Speaker, James Scott, "Strangling the Home Islands: America's Air War Against Japan."
- CPOW - What's Next? and Closing Remarks, Sally Meadows

CPOW 2025 Reunion Registration

Please fill out the required information below. Attach a separate sheet if needed.

First Name	Last Name	Member (Yes/No)	2025 Dues for Member
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Annual Dues Include \$15 for 2025 dues for each member, and include amount in the Dues column. **Total Dues** \$ _____

Registration including banquet* Member - \$90/Non-Member - \$100

* If you do not plan to attend the banquet, you can deduct \$40 from the full registration cost.

Number of Members _____ Non-Members _____ **Total Registration Cost** \$ _____

TOTAL \$

Please send your check made out to CPOW for the total to: Cindie Leonard, 1675 S. Lake Crest Way, Eagle, ID 83616

Please note that registration with CPOW for the reunion ends on February 7, 2025. IF space is available, late registrants will be charged an extra \$40.

To reserve a room at Embassy Suites by Hilton Sacramento Riverfront Promenade using our discount code 90V by February 5:

- Visit www.sacramento.embassysuites.com and make a reservation using the group/convention code: 90V, or use the following direct link:
<https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/deeplink/?ctyhocn=SACESES&groupCode=CES90V&arrivaldate=2025-02-21&departuredate=2025-02-23&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT>
- Call (916) 326-5000 and let the Front Desk Agent know you would like to make a reservation under the CPOW Civilian ex-Prisoners of War discount rate, 90V.

CPOW 2025 Membership Form

Please sign up for, or renew, your membership to receive our newsletter and get a discount on your reunion registration. Fill out this form and mail it with your check for \$15 (per person) to:

Cindie Leonard, 1675 S. Lake Crest Way, Eagle, ID 83616
Please make your check out to "Civilian ex-POWs"

Name(s): _____

Current Mailing Address: _____

Email Address (please print clearly): _____

Phone Number: _____

How would you like to receive the CPOW newsletter? ☐ Email ☐ US Mail ☐ Both

If you are a new member only, please complete the following information by checking the appropriate box indicating your connection to CPOW and provide the requested information below. You do not need to fill this out if you are a renewing member.

☐ **Former POW or internee**

Camp(s) Check all that apply: ☐ Santo Tomas ☐ Baguio/Bilibid ☐ Los Baños ☐ Other

Name in camp (if different than current name): _____

☐ **Descendant, Relative or Friend** _____

Describe your relationship to the ex-POW. Please share the name(s) of your relative(s) or friend(s) -- including the name(s) they went by in camp, along with the camp(s) they were interned in.

☐ **Military** Branch of Service _____

If you have any questions, please contact Cindie: cindieleonard@gmail.com or (208) 890-569

Upcoming 80th Commemoration of the Liberation of Manila

Ryan Blum

American Battle Monument Commission

On 22 February 2025, starting at 4:30pm, the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial will host a significant commemoration to mark the 80th anniversary of the Liberation of Manila. This event honors the valor and sacrifice of U.S. and Filipino service members, civilians, and all those who endured the brutal Battle of Manila during World War II. The commemoration will reflect on the shared history and enduring partnership between the United States and the Philippines, recognizing the profound impact the conflict had on the lives of countless individuals.

The ceremony will feature poignant elements, including an honor guard presentation by the joint U.S. and Philippine military, an honor guard by the 11th Airborne Division, a musical performance by the US Navy's 7th Fleet band, and a symbolic flyover by the Armed Forces of the Philippines, complete with a rose petal drop.

Attendees will also have an opportunity to explore the Manila American Cemetery grounds, where over 17,000 service members are laid to rest, and reflect on their stories of courage and sacrifice. This commemorative event aims not only to honor the past but also to inspire hope and unity for the future, emphasizing Manila's historic role as a "citadel of democracy in the East."

For those with ties to this chapter of history, we invite you to join us in remembering and honoring the lives impacted by the Liberation of Manila.

Contact manilaVC@abmc.gov for more information.

*Ryan Blum
Superintendent*

*American Battle Monuments Commission
Manila American Cemetery
McKinley Road | Fort Bonifacio | Taguig, City 1634,
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"Time will not dim the glory of their deeds."



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Image: Detail of a painting by Fernando Amorsolo

CPOW Newsletter
250 S Gordon Way
Los Altos, CA 94022-3735

80 Years Ago

Unfurling the flag at Santo Tomas (right),
February 6, 1945 (National Archives)

Los Baños internees walk to freedom (Carl Mydans photograph)

